

## Message Text

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TAGS: EFIN, ETEL, CT, US

SUBJECT: GOCAR/GT&E NEGOTIATIONS

REF: BANGUIN0849

1. A GTE NEGOTIATING TEAM, LED BY CARVIN AND DEBONDINI REPRESENTING GTE (US) AND GTE (ITALY) LEFT BANGUI JUNE 29 AFTER A WEEK-LONG VISIT DURING WHICH THEY WERE UNABLE TO MEET WITH BOKASSA, WHO REMAINED IN ZAIRE THROUGHOUT. IN HIS ABSENCE, GTE PRESENTED ITS CASE TO A NEGOTIATION TEAM FROM CENTRAL AFRICAN OFFICE OF POST AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS (OCPT) LED BY DIRECTOR GENERAL SALAMATE.

2. THE GTE TEAM CAME WITH FIVE MAJOR OBJECTIVES. THESE MET WITH VARYING DEGREES OF SUCCESS.

A. AN ATTEMPT TO HAVE GOCJR FORMALLY ACCEPT FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAST GOODS AND SERVICES FROM GTE (INCLUDING RECOGNITION OF EXIM BANK DEBTS) WAS INCONCLUSIVE IN BOKASSA'S ABSENCE. SALAMATE HOWEVER MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY THAT GOCAR WOULD CONTACT EXIM BANK IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE ITS DEBTS AND PROPOSE NEW REPAYMENT SCHEDULE.

B. NEGOTIATION OF A CONTINUED MAINTENANCE CONTRACT APPEARED TO BE SUCCESSFUL. GTE'S INSISTENCE UPON PRE-ARRANGED PAYMENT FOR ALL FUTURE WORK WAS ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE. A ROUGH ESTIMATE OF \$100,000 WAS AGREED UPON FOR TURN-ON AND MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES THROUGH 1978 FINAL AGREEMENT

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TDNANCE PROCEDURES THROUGH 1978 FINAL AGREEMENT

IS EXPECTED BETWEEN JULY 10-28.

C. GOCAR SUPPORT WAS SUCCESSFULLY ENLISTED FOR A REQUEST TO THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW THE TRANSFER OF EXISTING \$1.5 MN. CREDITS TIED TO PURCHASES OF GTE EQUIPMENT TO PERMIT PURCHASE OF CABLES IN FRANCE. ALL TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THESE PURCHASES HAVE BEEN ironed OUT. GOCAR WILL MAKE LIMITED INITIAL PURCHASES FROM ITS OWN RESOURCES WITHIN NEXT FEW WEEKS. GOCAR'S FINANCIAL CAPABILITY TO MAKE FURTHER PURCHASES, HOWEVER, DEPENDS UPON THE TRANSFER OF THE ITALIAN CREDITS, GTE AND GOCAR AGREED TO WORK ON THIS REQUEST THROUGH ITALIAN CHARGE HERE. FURTHER PROGRESS AWAITS OFFICIAL APPROVAL BY BOKASSA.

D. GTE'S DESIRES TO TIE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TURN-ON OF EXISTING SYSTEMS TO GOCAR FULFILLMENT OF CONSTRUCTION AND FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS WAS NOT VOICED DUE TO THE ABSENCE OF FORMAL CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS FOR MAINTENANCE, TRAINING, TURN-OFF AND OPERATIONAL ASSISTANCE.

E. OCPT WAS NON-COMMITTAL REGARDING GTE'S PLAN TO LIMIT CURRENT LONG-DISTANCE CAPABILITY TO BOALI, PISSA AND M'BAIKI. GTE BELIEVES THAT SIMILAR SERVICE TO CARNOT AND BERBERATI, ALTHOUGH OPTIMALLY QUITE PROFITABLE, OVER THE LONG TERM, WOULD NOW PLACE TOO MANY RESPONSIBILITIES ON GOCAR.

3. GTE'S ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE IS AS FOLLOWS: JULY --

(A) AWAIT BOKASSA'S RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED TURN-ON PROCEDURES AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS, (B) AWAIT ITALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FOR UNTYING CREDITS, AND (C) CONTINUE INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE AND TESTING OF THE SYSTEMS IN BERBERATI AND BANGUI WITH ALL WORK TO BE CONCLUDED BY MIDDLE OF MONTH. AUGUST-SEPTEMBER--ALL TECHNICAL PERSONNEL WILL HAVE DEPARTED EXCEPT TWO MAINTENANCE AND TESTING EXPERTS CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH MAINTAINING THE LINE TO BOBANGUI AND THE PRESIDENTIAL RANCH. OCTOBER--GIVEN APPROVAL OF NEW CONTINUED MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS, AN OVERSEEING TEAM WILL RETURN TO GAUGE GOCAR PROGRESS SINCE THE END OF JULY WITH AN EYE TOWARDS TURNING ON SYSTEMS IN BANGUI, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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M'BAIKI, PISSA AND BOALI STARTING IN EARLY NOVEMBER. THE KEY INDICATORS WILL BE: (A) COMPLETION OF POWER SYSTEMS IN M'BAIKI AND PISSA, (B) THE SUCCESSFUL LINKING OF THE PHONE STATION AND ENERCA POWER SOURCES IN BOALI, AND (C) GOOD PROGRESS ON OUTSIDE LINE CONSTRUCTION AT ALL THREE SITES. NOVEMBER--TURN-ON PROCEDURES WILL BEGIN IN M'BAIKI, PISSA AND BOALI, OVERSEEN BY TCPT AND INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION.

THE PROCESS WILL LAST BETWEEN FOUR AND SIX WEEKS. DECEMBER-- (A) A NEW EXCHANGE IN BANGUI WILL BE INAUGURATED AND (B) ALL TURN-ON PROCEDURES WILL BE COMPLETED IN M'BAIKI, PISSA AND BOALI BY THE E D OF THE MONTH. AFTER DECEMBER-- GTE IS PREPARED TO STAY IN CAR UNTIL 1978 TO CONTINUE TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS GIVEN GOCAR ASSURANCES REGARDING COUNTERPART SUPPORT AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

4. THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF GTE TOWARDS THE CAR IS ONE OF PATIENCE. THEY RECOGNIZE THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL TAKE TIME, THAT FULL FINANCIAL RENUMERATION IS WELL OFF IN THE FUTURE AND THJT THE TURN-ON AND MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES WILL LIKELY LAST INTO 1978. GTE IS ANXIOUS TO FINISH THE WORK IT HAS STARTED HERE, BUT WILL INSIST THAT ALL FURTHER WORK AND MATERIALS BE PAID FOR. THEY WILL CONTINUE TO ALLOW EX POST FACTO PAYMENT, BUT WILL INSIST UPON RELIABLE ASSURANCES THAT PAYMENT WILL BE FORTHCOMING.  
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